

eSMR FAQ's

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A. GENERAL QUESTIONS

Questions pertaining to the project as a whole:

How is the registration going to be done?

Each authorized user will be required to initially fill out a registration form, sign it, and then send it to the State Water Board. These will be kept in secure files. Each user will then be assigned a unique login and password to gain access to the CIWQS.

Will the system automatically send an alert for past due reports?

CIWQS will generate and send an email to the case worker of your permit.

Can one user see another user's data from the same facility?

Yes. All users authorized to see (or edit) data for a facility will be able to see all eSMR data for that facility.

Is this going to be mandatory for all dischargers?

Yes, all individual NPDES dischargers will be required to submit self monitoring reports electronically.

How will we know when we will be required to submit electronically?

There are several steps in submitting reports electronically.

Step 1) Generally as permits are renewed they will go through the coding process.

Step 2) Discharger will be notified for Training. Training will include reviewing permits and how to build a report through the CIWQS interface.

Step 3) Discharger will submit electronic and paper self-monitoring reports until both parties (discharger and State Water Board staff) are comfortable with the electronic submittals.

Step 4) State Water Board staff will notify discharger to discontinue paper report submittal.

Will the system automatically generate enforcement letters?

No, rather the system generates allegations that must be reviewed by staff. Staff is still responsible for generating enforcement letters if needed. CIWQS/eSMR only helps speed the review process.

We have reporting requirements for other state agencies, such as the Department of Toxic Substance Control. Will we still be required to submit to both agencies once I am using eSMR?

Yes, you must continue to submit both reports because currently our system cannot talk to other state agencies systems.

B. REGISTRATION QUESTIONS

Questions on how the registration and approval process will work:

My Vice President doesn't want to sit there and enter accounts for the facility. Can you make another administrator for the facility?

The Legally Responsible Official does not need to "enter" anything. This person is responsible for reviewing applications and approving/denying access.

What if two dischargers are using the same lab?

Multiple dischargers may use the same lab. CIWQS/eSMR accounts are provided per person. So, a lab technician/director could have one eSMR account, with access to provide data on behalf of multiple facilities.

Who has the responsibility to take people out of authorization?

For every agency there will be at least one legally responsible person designated for managing the accounts for their agency.

C. PAPER TO ELECTRONIC QUESTIONS

These questions will answer the difference between your current SMR and the new eSMR:

What is eSMR?

The new electronic Self Monitoring Reports (eSMRs) compliance-checking functionality will supplement staff's review of monitoring data.

Before submitting your monitoring report the system will perform compliance checking. When you are satisfied that the report is accurate you click on the submit button. Once

submitted, State Water Board staff will review the report, taking into account your comments. After staff evaluates all the relevant information they will determine if there is a violation. To address concerns about the new system we have prepared the following list of questions and answers, or frequently asked questions, organized in three sections. If your question is not answered below, please click [Contact Us](#) link to the left.

How will the system evaluate compliance with mass based limits? Will a discharger be required to calculate these?

Yes, dischargers perform the calculations for mass-based requirements.

How will amended monitoring results that supersede the previously submitted results be handled?

The discharger will request that the case worker for their permit withdraw a submitted report. The withdrawn report will then be In-Progress in CIWQS. The discharger can then update the necessary information and re-submit the report.

Will I be able to view the requirements (numeric & narrative) of my permit that will be in CIWQS?

Yes, in advance of being required to submit the self-monitoring reports electronically, you will be notified to review all the limits placed in CIWQS/eSMR. The CIWQS/eSMR will not contain your entire permit. It will look very similar to your paper self-monitoring report. You will still need to keep and read your permit.

What if your permit gets modified?

As your permit changes through modification or renewals, your requirements in CIWQS/eSMR will be modified accordingly.

Are you considering phasing out the annual reports?

Currently, CIWQS annual reports are expecting result for annual (one-year) sampling requirements. CIWQS does not require submittal of information summarizing previously submitted data.

Will the system default to certain units? What if I have one unit of measurement for monthly and another unit of measurement for quarterly?

The required units in CIWQS should match the units stated in your paper permit. When submitting data through the "Raw Data" screen, the correct units will be the default. If using the CDF Tool or any other third party tool to create an EDF compliant file, you must ensure the units selected match the units in CIWQS.

If your compliance date to submit your report is on a weekend or holiday, what is the rule on when the report is due?

Your report due date does not change, even if it falls on a weekend or holiday.

Will eSMR use the same pollutant parameter codes as the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) uses?

Although the parameter names will be standardized, they will not be the same as USEPA's parameter codes.

D. GETTING DATA INTO THE SYSTEM

Answers related to how permit information is translated to the system and how to input data:

How will the system handle hardware crashes or service downtime?

CIWQS Production hours are Monday through Friday from 8:00AM until 5:00PM. If an unanticipated event occurs during these hours prohibiting you from submitting timely reports, you should submit your files to your case worker via email. The State Water Board records system downtimes.

What are the technical requirements necessary?

This application is browser based. Internet Explorer 6.0 is recommended.

Additional Software:

The free PDF reader is required for users to view and print submitted reports. If you plan on using the CDF tool to prepare your data to be uploaded into CIWQS, then Microsoft Excel 2000 or later is required.

What are my options for populating data in CIWQS?

Data may be entered using the "Raw Data" screen or uploading CIWQS a compliant file. CIWQS compliant files are either created by the CDF tool or created by your LIMS.

If you let the lab submit the data for you, how do you reject the data they submitted?

The discharger can delete the uploaded CIWQS Compliant file and make the lab resubmit it. Only legally authorized users can actually submit the data to the State Water Board.

What about submitting late data?

The system will allow you to submit data anytime. Late submittals will be reviewed by your case worker.

How can you save the data you are entering?

There are save buttons on every screen.

Can you take data that is in Excel and put it into EDF format?

Yes, but you need to export your Excel data in a CIWQS compliant format.

Will there be a record that people other than the certification and submission person has reviewed the data?

No, you will have to use another mechanism to make sure this has happened.

Will you have to retype the entire thing if you only want to change the result of one parameter?

- ☐ If you've uploaded the data but have not yet certified and submitted, then you have to delete the file from CIWQS, modify the original file, and then upload again.
- ☐ If you are using the Raw Data Screen and have not yet certified and submitted, then you only have to modify the one parameter.
- ☐ If you have already certified and submitted, you must request that the report be withdrawn, modify the data, and resubmit.

Is there a size limit for uploading?

Yes, the limit is 75 MB per upload.

Will the Legally Responsible Official have an opportunity to review the report before the final submission?

Yes, the Legally Responsible Official can view the report by clicking the "preview report" button on the Cover Letter tab. The report will appear in PDF format.

The Legally Responsible Official may also review the report by clicking through the tabs within CIWQS, however, this option will require the Error Check to be run before certifying and submitting.

How will it be noted that there was a reason that samples were not collected. For example, due to bad weather conditions, no water present, etc.?

The discharge would make comments in the cover letter and in the comment fields for the requirement in question. There is a check box for no flow, which the discharger can check for that purpose. Board staff will make violation determination not the system.

How will the system handle the unavailability of results due to delay by a contract laboratory?

The discharge will submit their monitoring report timely and annotate any problems in the cover sheet. Staff will evaluate these circumstances.

Can you take the report builder out in the field?

CIWQS/eSMR is internet based so if there is internet connection in the field, you can complete the report in the field.

Does the raw data have to be attached to a monitoring location?

Yes, all data submitted must be in response to a pre-established monitoring location. If samples are State Water Board must be contacted so that the “regulatory measure” (the data from a permit, as stored in CIWQS) can be updated.

If you have a monitoring requirement with no limit, what happens?

The monitoring requirement will be displayed without a limit. You can simply report the value.

I want to lock the report once my senior water engineer says that the data is ready to go, is this possible?

No, this is not possible. Anyone that has the user rights to access the report can change data.

What if you have no discharge for the beginning of the month, and then have sample data at the end of the reporting period, will the system think I’m in violation?

No, the system will flag the data because it will expect monitoring data for the whole reporting period, but you will have explained it in your comment section, which will be reviewed by the case handler.

If I have a whole set (for example, 100 points) of data that is required but I don't report on, will I have to submit comments 100 times?

Yes, you will have to comment every time, or write "see attached" and provide an attached explanation.

E. GETTING DATA OUT OF THE SYSTEM

How data is retrieved from the system:

Will we get an electronic receipt that our eSMR was submitted on time?

Yes. A confirmation number will be displayed and an email will be sent to the Legally Responsible Official.

Can you print out a pre-printed report prior to submittal?

The current system is designed to create a PDF once a report is submitted.

Who gets copies of the "certified and submitted report"?

Copies are not created and distributed. Rather, eSMR creates a PDF of your submittal that is stored for review by yourself or State Water Board staff.

Do we have to keep hard copies if our data will be stored in this system?

Yes, the current legal requirements have not changed.

What access will the public have to eSMR and CIWQS in general?

CIWQS is not directly accessible by the general public but data from CIWQS is available through reports and through information requests.

F. CDF and UPLOADING ERRORS & CDF Tool Errors:

Below are common errors encountered when using and uploading CDF files and possible ways to resolve them.

Error:

Run-time error '13': Type mismatch

To Resolve: Missing data in a required column/field. Make sure all required columns are populated.

Error: "File not found: Zip32-23.dll"

To Resolve: During the installation process you did not have local administrator rights and the zip32-23.dll file did not copy to the windows directory. You are attempting to use the CDF templates without installing the CDF executable first.

Issue: No Analytical Method (i.e. flow)

To Resolve: Use Data Unavailable

Issue: Sample Analysis Date not supplied by Lab

To Resolve: Use sample collection date for the analysis date

Uploading Errors:**Pass 1 Errors:**

An IO Exception occurred: error in opening zip filePass 2 Errors: None found.

Reason for error:

You are attempting to upload CDF Excel Workbook. Upload zip file only.

Pass 1 Errors:

Archive content error: Flat File or Relational format not detected.

Reason for error:

You are attempting to upload a zip file that is not a CDF file. The CDF Tool creates a zipped folder that contains a CDF.CVS and CDFINFO text file.

Pass 1 Errors:

CDF.CSV, line 33: Primary key uniqueness violated.

'200605010000N/AN/AWnullnullnullE413.1nullnull20060501nullnullPROILGREASEnullnull' already exists as a primary key.

Reason for error:

This error occurs when two rows in your CDF file have the exact same monitoring location, sample collection date, sample collection time, parameter and units.